

wish, on the contrary, that there had been even more

Normans there, or more Conquests since.

This may be fanciful. It may be that in the course of a few centuries climate outweighs race. Double the hours of sunshine in England, and it is probable that we should hardly know our present solemn selves. In any case, it must remain difficult to distinguish the different racial factors in a mongrel stock. And yet, century after century, certain persistent features in English literature seem typically Germanic; others, rather less markedly, French,

There is no doubt a Celtic element as well; but there lies a still more perilous quest, in the twilight of which

Matthew Arnold himself got sadly lost. For present purposes that can be left on one side. It is enough to suggest that certain English writers, such as Langland, Malory, Ascham (much as he loathed Malory), Spenser, Jonson, Milton, Bunyan, Swift, Cowper, Blake, Wordsworth, Dickens, Carlyle, Ruskin, Browning, Meredith, D. H. Lawrence, by a certain intense earnestness, usually combined with melancholy or violence or hysteria, by an obsession with good morals at the expense, very often, of good sense, good manners, or good taste, by a feeling for righteousness before beauty and even before truth, recall at moments that sombre race which destroyed Latin civilisation in Britain and hammered out on its cold ashes a literature, often vigorous, often dignified in its sadness, but hag-ridden with religion and staggering

under a bur-
den of unconscionable boredom. Through
that stark
Saxon poetry no sun seems to shine, no sea
to laugh.
Only the white blizzard drives shrieking into
the white-
ness of the foam; only the black raven and
the grey wolf
gather from the forest round the human
carriion of the
battlefield. Those hard Saxon faces seem too
scarred to
smile; vain to look to those iron fitigers for a&y
lightness of